

**Report to** Cabinet  
25 June 2014  
**Report of** Head of citywide services  
**Subject** Byelaw to manage skateboarding in the city

**Item**

**11**

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### **Purpose**

To consider making a byelaw prohibiting skateboarding in a designated area of the city which will assist in preventing damage to historic buildings and preventing nuisance to members of the public using the highway.

### **Recommendation**

To recommend council to make a byelaw to manage skateboarding in the city centre.

### **Corporate and service priorities**

The report helps to meet the corporate priority “A safe and clean city” and the service plan priority of “tackling and preventing anti-social behaviour”.

### **Financial implications**

Funded from existing budget.

**Ward:** Mancroft

**Cabinet member:** Councillor Keith Driver – neighbourhoods and community safety.

### **Contact officers**

Michael Stephenson 01603 212283

Adrian Akester 01603 2123331

### **Background documents**

Nil

## **Report**

### **Background**

In May 2010 the council opened a national standard skate park in Eaton Park. This was funded by the agreement between Norwich City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and has proved to be extremely well used and very popular.

It cost £300,000 and was built to the city council's specifications by Freestyle Skateparks. It also had design input by the Norwich skate park consultation group. It is located near the community centre and sports ground in Eaton Park and covers approximately 1,000 square metres.

The skate park is an ideal place for skateboarders, BMXers and inline skaters of all abilities to improve their skills. It is also of a standard to accommodate demonstrations and national level events. The skate park is free to use and there are floodlights operating until 10pm on a push button system allowing the park to be used all year round.

The development of the skatepark was designed to co-incide with the renovation and restoration of the city's war memorial which had long been attractive to skateboarders. It was clear at that time that the council, having worked to secure a significant skatepark for Norwich, would not look kindly on damage being done to the memorial or other historic buildings in the city from on-street skateboarding.

### **Action taken to resolve the issue**

Despite the development of the skate park, skateboarders remain attracted to the following areas in the city centre:

- i. The newly renovated Grade II listed war memorial and memorial gardens.
- ii. The area of public land immediately in front of St Peter Mancroft Church and The Forum.
- iii. The front of the Grade II\* listed City Hall at the north end by the ground floor clock tower entrance.
- iv. Gaol Hill leading to London Street.
- v. Hay Hill.

Council officers and members have spoken to the skateboarders in the city centre on many occasions, and put up notices asking people not to skate, but without any legal powers to move them on this has had little success. The council has carried out some joint work with the police (PCSOs) but this was equally unsuccessful due to the transient nature of the skateboarders.

### **Summary of the damage to the War Memorial and City Hall**

Skateboarder's use the edged areas on the structures to carry out manoeuvres which has result in damage to stonework on the war memorial, City Hall, and other buildings.

Damage is being caused within the War Memorial Gardens, in particular to the steps within the gardens but also to those at the base of the memorial and the raised beds.

Further damage to City Hall is particularly evident on the step/ramp outside the clock tower and along the raised bed that sits along the front of City Hall. Damage is also now being caused to the plinth at the base of the tower on St Giles Street. In each of the above areas, the damage consists of deep incisions in the stonework, in some cases with fairly large 'chips' being taken out of it and edges being eroded.

At present, the areas of damage would not be considered bad enough to warrant the repair/replacement of the stone, as this could potentially have a more damaging visual effect and would also lead to the loss of historic fabric. However, should the damage continue at its current rate it is likely that methods of repair or renewal would need to be considered in conjunction with the council's conservation and design officers and English Heritage.

## **Proposal**

To make a byelaw under section 235 Local Government Act 1972 that would prohibit skateboarding in a designated area of the city.

The byelaw is effectively a local law with limited application to deal with a specific issue. The non-compliance with the byelaw is a criminal offence which can be addressed by legal action through the courts or by giving a formal caution. There is also the provision for the court to make a post-conviction anti-social behaviour order.

The statutory procedure to make a byelaw requires a full council resolution, and advertising for four weeks before being submitted to the Secretary of State for confirmation.

In accordance with the required application to the Secretary of State, the council is satisfied that the byelaw is necessary in the local context and that the application is reasonable and that other means of addressing the situation at which the byelaws are directed are inappropriate or insufficient.

Examples of other council's which have made byelaws to manage skateboarding include Northampton, Exeter, Wolverhampton, Bournemouth and Hastings.

## **Area covered by byelaw**

The proposed area of the city to which the byelaw would apply is shown on the plan in Appendix 1.

In determination of this area the council had regard to the areas of the city where there are currently issues as well as other locations that may potentially be used.

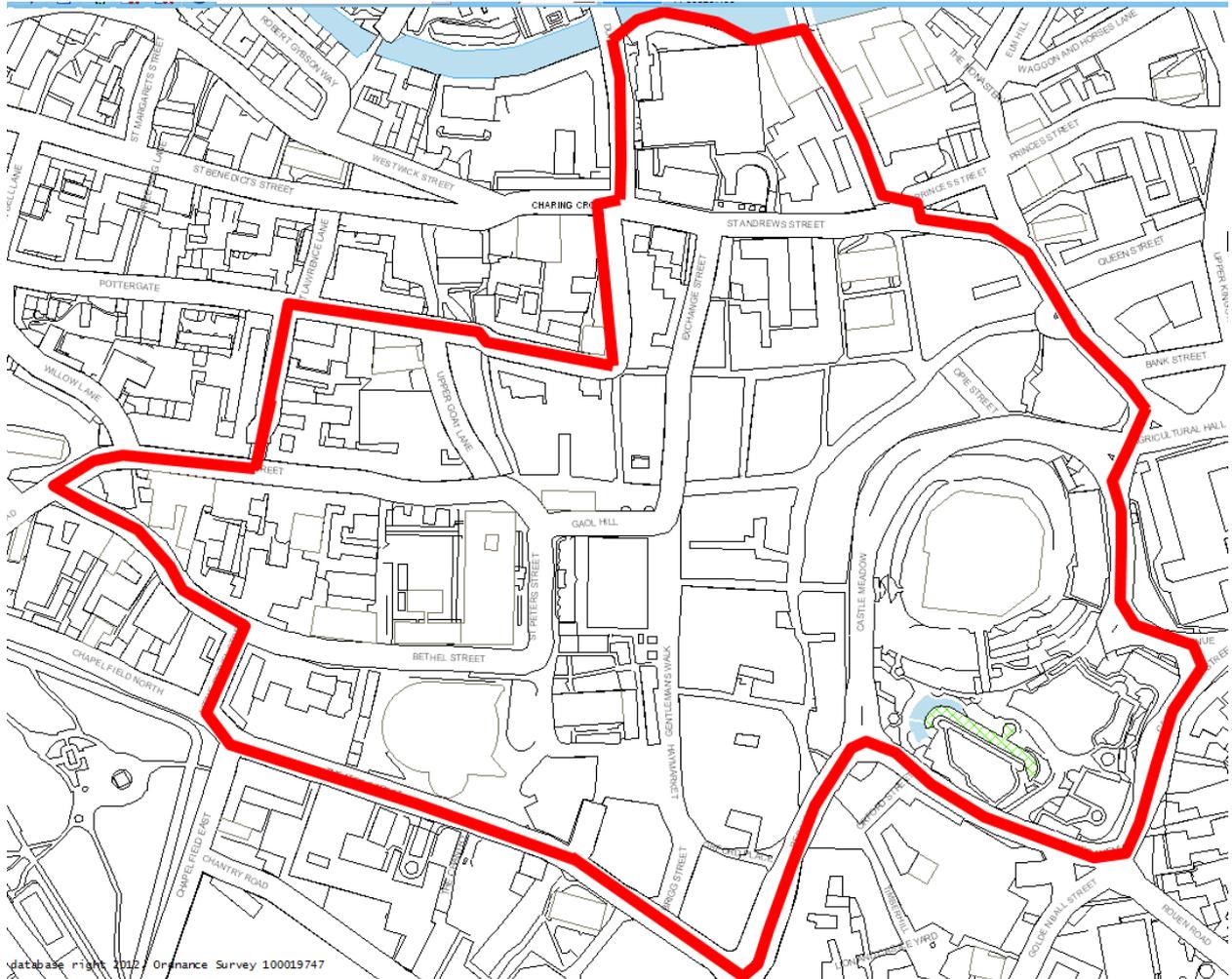
The proposal is to designate the central area as no skateboarding other than on private land with the express consent of the owner and the remainder of the city outside of this area to allow skateboarding but not in a manner to cause danger or give reasonable grounds for annoyance to other person using the footway or carriageway. This is the approach taken by other local authorities across the country to deal with this problem.

## **Implementation**

Once the bylaw is introduced we will seek to advise and inform those not complying before we take enforcement action.

The bylaw will be enforced using existing council enforcement procedures and protocols as well as working with the police.

## Appendix 1



## Integrated impact assessment



**NORWICH**  
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report  
Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

### Report author to complete

<b>Committee:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Committee date:</b>	25 June 2014
<b>Head of service:</b>	Adrian Akester
<b>Report subject:</b>	Making of a skateboarding byelaw
<b>Date assessed:</b>	May 2014
<b>Description:</b>	

	Impact			
<b>Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Finance (value for money)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will support the managemnt of disorder in the city centre
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Recommendations from impact assessment</b>
<b>Positive</b>
<b>Negative</b>
<b>Neutral</b>
<b>Issues</b>